

**Enhance Spanish Language Learning through TPR (Total Physical
Response) Strategies**

Sandra Lisset Yanez Chinchay

Presented to
The Graduate Program
of
Greensboro College

In partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education in
Elementary Education

November 2022

Advisor: Molly A. Riddle

Abstract

In the last ten years, learning Spanish has become a more important matter as Hispanic population has grown and there is a significant demand for Spanish education in the schools. Research suggests that foreign language study enhances children's understanding of how language itself works and their ability to manipulate language in the service of thinking and problem solving (Cummins 1981).

Educators are looking for innovative strategies that provide students with the skills to be competitive in the new world and finding adequate resources could be a challenge.

This project aims to provide an interactive guide with dynamic strategies to assist K-5 Elementary teachers in facilitating delivery of content and language comprehension while also achieving academic expectations in Spanish through the design of a Total Physical Response interactive guide. This guide is aligned with the learning outcomes and academic goals for Spanish in Elementary.

TPR is useful for teachers because learners are given the opportunity to enjoy the learning process while developing different skills. Bilingualism fosters the development of verbal and spatial abilities (Diaz 1983).

Thus, the importance of applying an innovative and meaningful strategy in order to help Spanish learners to reach the goals.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate my work to my family, who has always been my biggest source of motivation. Thank you for your faith, I am so grateful to have shared this experience with you. I also dedicate this project to my parents, Anita and Carlos, whose unconditional love and support have been with me despite the miles separating us.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Molly Riddle for her excellent guidance, caring and patience throughout the completion of my studies. I would also like to thank my friends, they were always supporting me, showing me love and encouraging me with their best wishes.

Table of Contents

	Page
Title Page	1
Abstract	2
Dedication	3
Acknowledgments	4
Table of Contents	5
Chapters	
1. Chapter One: Introduction	6
2. Chapter Two: Literature Review	10
3. Chapter Three: Project Design	18
4. Chapter Four: The Project “TPR Guide for Teachers”	21
5. Chapter Five: Conclusions	31
6. References	33
7. Appendix.....	39

Enhance Spanish Language Learning through TPR (Total Physical Response) Strategies

Total Physical Response (TPR) is one of the best ways to teach Spanish to new language learners; because toddlers can follow directions long before they can talk. Porto and Chaparro (2014) stated that “TPR is an appropriate method to work with children, as it not only helped them acquire vocabulary, but also increases their participation and motivation. Students’ attitudes improved too, because children interacted more among themselves, and they had a cooperative learning process.” (p.8) The physical response actually plays an important role in connecting abstract sounds to meaning.

Spanish is the second most common native language in the world. Spanish follows only Mandarin Chinese and includes almost a million more speakers than the English language. Therefore, the importance and benefits of speaking a second language for both children and adults are abundant. Spanish-speakers can talk to more people, have more professional opportunities and broaden their horizons and cultural knowledge. Klimova (2018) states that learning of a foreign language may generate a lot of benefits for older individuals, such as enhancement of cognitive functioning, their self-esteem, increased opportunities of socializing, or reduction of costs.

TPR is a technique that helps students enjoy and experience a language before using it. This is done physically by following directions or acting out words sometimes even before saying them aloud. It works for children, teens and adult learners. TPRs are not a single game or activity, but more like a way of approaching the instruction. Methods like the Natural Approach (NA) and TPR have been used successfully with students who are learning a second language through the use of gesturing techniques (Asher, 2003). Gesture is a fundamental component of

language. Our hands and body help us talk, think, and express. With a movement of the hands or body, we are expressing meaning, intention, or emotions.

The TPR method emphasizes these elements: the use of movement as a memory enhancer and commands as a method of instruction. As Holleny (2012) affirms, when teachers give commands and students act them out it helps to increase listening fluency and verbal working memory.

I developed this project because I wanted to promote an active learning process and support students by helping them to release energy, which is vital to avoid cognitive overload and to increase their attention. A lack of physical exercise, caused by sitting for too long, leads to a decline in the ability to concentrate and willingness to learn, even more in kindergarteners. “The method is unique because it requires the use of facial and body motions as a way to help students develop in their English oral expressions. The teacher gives commands in English and then models what he or she is saying” (Mendoza, 2016, p. 25). TPR is a technique that gets children moving while reinforcing new language structures and academic vocabulary.

According to Muhren (2003), the basic technique of TPR is simple. Learners act out commands given by the teacher or their fellow pupils. These commands, or series of commands, are simple at the beginning (e.g., standup, sit down) but after some time they may become more complex (e.g., touch your nose, go to the other classroom, walk in circles, etc.).

The TPR teaching method has a lot of benefits in learning Spanish. On one hand, it can catch students’ attention in a fun way; on the other hand, it can create a relaxed environment to make the students learn Spanish through movements and physical activities. It can also enhance their self-confidence and motivate their learning of Spanish. Methods like the NA and TPR have been used successfully with students who are learning a second language through the use of gesturing techniques (Asher, 2003).

For this project, I have compiled TPR strategies to help teachers to offer a positive learning environment in a fun way, implementing an interactive digital guide where teachers can use to improve and increase student engagement. Research related to the influence of movement in early ages' learning support that teaching with activities and physical movement makes possible to increase learner's competence, memory and performance. Movement in children can help increase memory, perception, language, attention, emotion and decision making. (Moyses 2012).

Duan (2021) highlighted that a great deal of scientific research suggested that the left and right hemispheres of the human brain were responsible for different tasks. Learning a second language was a process of using the right brain to establish a link between a second language and physical activity. Applying TPR means that one side of the brain works while the other was stimulated. This improves the efficiency of learning. the learning process became slow when the language information was only entered into the left hemisphere of the brain.

This project's main aim is to share with elementary educators the multiple benefits of implementing TPR activities and strategies in their classroom. An interactive digital guide was designed to demonstrate how teachers can improve the delivery of the content they teach and enhance students' learning of Spanish. The first slide highlights the benefits of integrating these activities in the classroom. In second slide helps teachers learn more about how to put the model in action with some practical instructions. In the third slide, teachers watch a video that details how beneficial it is to apply TPR strategies in a kindergarten classroom.

It is vital for teachers to recognize that our body is a powerful tool that can improve their teaching and impact positively in all the students. This interactive digital guide has been designed using research as a basis to support this approach.

Children have brilliant, active minds and the best way to engage and active their mental powers is to keep them engaged and entertained. Besides keeping kids entertained, movement also improves memory and recall. Many children struggle with being bored at school. The reasons for boredom may vary but in kindergarten it could just be that it is hard for them to sit through so much desk time. For some children, being bored at school is an occasional occurrence, but for others, it is an ongoing complaint, one that causes real distress, apathy, or frustration, and can even lead to school bad behaviors.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a language-teaching method, originally developed by James Asher, an American professor of psychology at San José State University in California, in the 1960s. Total Physical Response (TPR) is based on the theory that memory is enhanced through association with physical movement. It is sometimes associated with theories of language acquisition in very young children, where they respond physically to parental commands. TPR as an approach to teaching a second language is mainly based on listening. This is linked to physical actions that are designed to reinforce comprehension of any topic.

Dr. Asher demonstrated how to apply TPR for best results at more than 500 elementary, secondary schools and universities around the world. From a variety of these experimental research and trials in hundreds of school classrooms around the world in scores of languages, we know how TPR works more than any other idea in second language learning. Total Physical Response is a language teaching method built around the coordination of speech and action; it attempts to teach language through physical (motor) activity (Richards and Rodgers, 2010).

The theory of TPR affirms that the brain learns a second language in the same way that it learns at first. According to Dr. Asher (2000), the "Neural blueprint does not change with age" (p. 6-2). This means that the way the brain can assimilate language when you are a baby is the way that can assimilate it now. There are "language-body conversations" (Asher, 2000, p. 6-2). Therefore, learning through TPR would be similar to how an infant learns language. Kuo et al., (2013) affirmed that language learning with the form of human body could promote learner performance based on theory of embodied cognition. Young learners in the classrooms need a lot of TPR in order to enhance vocabulary learning. There is an undeniable relation or connection between movement and learning. Jensen (2000) stated that traditional seatwork

engages less of the brain. He affirms that if we want learners to remember what they are learning, we have to get them involved: Get them moving. Start “playing” more and “working” less (p. 6).

According to Er (2013) early years of life are the period when emotional, physical, cognitive and language development is very fast. It is the most valuable time to start teaching a foreign language or languages to young children. Although there are various methods and techniques in teaching foreign languages, the most appropriate one for young learners is Total Physical Response method. The TPR teaching method encourages teaching any language through physical actions, gestures, and commands and has a lot of benefits for students who are learning Spanish. On one hand, it can catch students’ attention in a fun way; on the other hand, it can create a relaxed environment to make the students learn Spanish through movements and physical activities. At the same time, it can also enhance their self-confidence and motivate their learning of Spanish.

Integrating physical activity into academic instruction should be offered at all school levels (i.e., elementary, middle, high school and college). In Jensen’s (2000) study he mentioned that “Physical activity has also been known to stimulate the release of epinephrine and norepinephrine (adrenaline) enabling children to become more alert and ready to learn” (p. 29). Putting in practice TPR in the lessons means getting students to move so that they can understand a new language. As a teacher, we engage the “kinesthetic” side of them that leaves many students moving in their seats.

Brain research appears to validate the concept of movement's contribution to learning. Doherty and Miravalles (2019) affirm that neuroscientific evidence suggests that sedentarism impacts negatively on brain health, and not only physical well-being. The TPR teaching method

emphasizes that abstract thinking is based on image thinking. We are different because of the two hemispheres of brain function. According to the left-brain, right-brain dominance theory, the right side of the brain is best at expressive and creative tasks. The left side of the brain is adept at tasks involving logic, language, and analytical thinking (Corballis, 2014). Doherty and Miravalles (2019) also mention that teaching and learning cannot focus purely on the brain, to the exclusion of the body. The traditional lecture-style lesson relegates students to a passive and sedentary role, precluding physical movement. Science attempted to prove that with more movement and stimulation, there are more nerve brain connections and a greater likelihood of meaningful learning. Teaching a second language should not only address the brain, but also the whole body in order to attain positive cognitive results.

Studies with another language, like Spanish, demonstrate that TPR is "brain compatible," meaning there is short- and long-term retention that is striking and statistically significant across studies. We can compare learning with TPR to riding a bicycle. Even if years have passed since acquiring the riding skill, after a few practices, proficiency returns. Children and adults have experienced immediate understanding when applying this dynamic and powerful concept in the classroom. Unfortunately, this approach mostly stays at the lower grade of primary school. Most important of all, it is still not widely spread. In addition, traditional approaches of vocabulary teaching lay stress on rules and grammar instead of meanings. Varano (2021) affirms that TPR is often cited as working best for young students; however, it shouldn't be completely neglected as a tool for adults. TPR can help demonstrate the meaning of a new word, especially for students with a very minimal base, regardless of age.

Total Physical Response

Oral language development is the foundation for literacy in school (Strickland &

Shanahan, 2004). There are various types of teaching methods in elementary schools, among which, TPR is mostly used in conventional education settings. Direct instruction is another teacher-centered strategy commonly used to explicitly convey information and develop skills in students involving sequential steps or repetition to improve oral language. DeCecco (1968) states that the TPR teaching method takes a psychologist's point of view, namely "memory trace". The theory of "memory trace" thinks that the greater the track frequency and intensity of contact is, the stronger the memory connection is, and the more easily it is recalled.

Nation (1990) claimed that there is no doubt that vocabulary knowledge is a fundamental aspect of language learning and language use.

Specialists and researchers have stated that language learners need to master at least 3,000-word families to communicate and understand 95 percent of the language communicated by native speakers (need citation since you said "specialists and researchers have stated" Give them credit here.). Therefore, to master new words, means that language learners have to fully comprehend vocabulary knowledge of each word they encounter. For instance, Nation (1990) has affirmed that language learners need at least 5-16 times the exposure to master new words.

Effectiveness of Total Physical Response

A positive link exists between physical activity and learning. Regular physical activity can help children and adolescents improve cardiorespiratory fitness, build strong bones and muscles, control weight, reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, and reduce the risk of developing health conditions. According to Dishman, (1985, 1986) studies have shown that the process of exercise brings about both short and long term psychological enhancement and mental well-being. Physical activity has been found to have a positive causal effect on self-esteem changes in adults (Sonstroem, 1984).

In the classroom, this strategy also works to teach in small or large groups. It sharpens students' listening skills and helps to improve academic performance, higher grades, and test scores. Kinesthetic learners and visual learners will benefit from TPR activities as a learning approach. After a study elaborated by Astri, Z (2018) about how well the TPR method improves the vocabulary of students with different learning styles. TPR method worked effectively for kinesthetic learning style since 100 % of kinesthetic learners have significant vocabulary development with TPR method. The study also affirmed that TPR method is also appropriate for visual auditory learners because 100 % of them develop significant vocabularies with the method.

Classroom physical activity can benefit students, particularly for beginners and young learners by improving their concentration and ability to stay on-task in the classroom. Some clear examples are that students show less disruptive behavior, and interruptions in the classroom as well as more motivation and engagement in the learning process increasing their amount of daily physical activity. According to Närhi, Kiiski & Savolainen (2017) disruptive behavior in classrooms is a significant challenge for learning in schools and risk factor for the students' academic achievement and a significant source of teachers' work-related stress. Apart from this, it is stress-free and can be effectively adapted to the virtual classroom. Besides, there is a high-speed, long-term retention of target language and, in many cases, instant understanding of the target language, regardless of academic aptitude or previous knowledge.

Porto and Chaparro (2014) argued that “TPR is an appropriate method to work with children, as it not only helped them acquire vocabulary, but also increases their participation and motivation. Students' attitudes improved too, because children interacted more among themselves and they had a cooperative learning process” (p. 8). TPR activities are great for

introverted students because no one is called individually. It is important to note that in all cases TPR, with different variations, guide the students in their learning process.

TPR strategies

McNeill, (2005) affirms that many gestures, which are meaningful hand and body movements, are produced concurrently with speech, conveying information complementing the speech. Several studies demonstrated that viewing nonspontaneous representational gestures, which convey meaning via their visual form and motion, can enhance memory for novel second language (L2) words (Macedonia, 2014; Macedonia & von Kriegstein, 2012).

Applying TPR strategies develops a relaxed learning process by keeping the information simple and modeling for the students before commands are given. The strategy starts with simple commands to keep stress levels low giving constructive feedback, enabling students to improve as they listen, repeat, and respond.

Movement increases attention and emotional regulation and enhances learning. “From this perspective we can say that people do not learn only from the intellect but also through the body” (Cañabate & Soler, 2017, p.50).

TPR strategies are effective when modeling and repeatedly saying the new vocabulary word for the students. It is even better teaching with exaggerated gestures, facial expressions, props, or body movement to illustrate the meaning of the word. Also using materials and objects in the lessons for intermediate to advanced TPR classes. Students are completely involved in the whole process; mimic the same gestures, facial expressions, use of props, or body movement as the teacher says the word. Students can make the connections between oral and written words when the teacher writes the word or phrase on the board.

Dr. Asher (1966) also observed that children typically are not able to speak until they listen to languages for a long time, and they can comprehend their parents' utterances and respond. He was able to make three hypotheses. First, language is learned primarily through listening. Second, language learning must engage right hemisphere of brain. Third, learning a language should not involve any level of stress.

Stress factor

Stress is a language-learning threaten in many aspects and can affect students at all levels. Applying TPR strategies aims to eliminate as much stress as possible from the learning process. According to Weineck (2004), the causes of stress are cognitive overload and, at the same time, less physical activity. He claimed that a chronic lack of physical exercise, caused by sitting and concentrating for too long, leads to a decline in the ability to concentrate and willingness to learn. Movement and gestures while learning have even been found to “reduce distress and allow the immune system to function more effectively” (Trakhtenberg, 2008, p. 850). The readings mentioned justified the use of TPR teaching method and affirmed that it will greatly enhance the students' learning efficiency in all levels.

Limitations of Existing Research

The research about TPR is broad, as well as the characteristics of young learners and the best way for them to learn but has significant limitations. The necessity to spread the practice of these strategies in the school among teachers is essential, in order to promote more meaningful and lasting teaching in the long term. Children, because they have particular characteristics, need to move and learn in a natural way, that does not limit their type of learning or force them to learn.

There are several reasons to use TPR strategies in the classroom. Children sometimes are very young to start learning another language, so it is difficult for them to remember the words they are learning. Another reason is that they are active and talkative, sometimes cannot sit quietly, but usually stand up and move around the classroom, making hard for the teacher to give an effective lesson. If any of this situation happens, children often forget what they learned in the previous lesson, so this affects their learning and speaking fluency. Thus, one of the challenges is to discover how do school teachers facilitate the learning of the Spanish language through the application of TRP strategies. There is another factor that limits language learning, which is the lack of teacher training techniques. Gesturing is a teaching technique that is used in successful methods such as The Natural Approach and Total Physical Response (TPR) in helping students learn and comprehend Spanish language.

Based on the psychological characteristics of the learners, children tend to have short attention combined with a great amount of physical energy. According to Lai and Chang (2020) in classroom learning and afterschool reading, the performance of school-age children has worsened. Parents often attribute this to reduced attention. The attentional problems of school children are a crucial topic due to abundant information in this digital era. They are easily distracted by their surroundings and are more interested in the physical and the tangible than the abstract. As Scott and Ytreberg (1990) described, “Their own understanding comes through hands and eyes and ears. The physical world is dominant at all times” (p.2084). When trying other strategies than translate, we confirm that translation does not help most students because there is no long-term understanding. When students translate, there is short-term comprehension, which is erased the moment the student leaves the classroom, if not sooner.

Chapter Three: Project Design

In this chapter, I explain the rationale of creating a short but useful guide with activities, gestures, and body movements for classroom teachers in the context of teaching Spanish as a second language. This interactive guide intends to be an additional resource for teachers to use when start teaching a second language to early Spanish learners to develop vocabulary and improve their reading skills.

This guide will assist teachers to find ways to deliver their lessons with greater ease and in an academic fun way. Teachers would, not only be focusing on teaching basic vocabulary as they usually do, but also, they would engage and involve students in early reading. It is important because children can respond with gestures long before they are ready to use the language orally. Total Physical Response (TPR) is that engages children kinesthetically, bringing the language into their young bodies. This experience is fun and essential to students' success.

Learning a second language in the 21century is considered increasingly important and a valuable opportunity, as the world becomes more interconnected and it is necessary to learn new languages and foster new perspectives of looking at the world in order to be the best global citizen you can be.

Research has continuously shown that learning a foreign language at a younger age is more beneficial for students, versus waiting until high school (Marian & Shook 2012).

The use of TPR (Total Physical Response) is a method that has become important when teaching in Elementary due to the increasing population of Spanish immigrant in the world. According to Potowski (2010) "Spanish is the most publicly present and vibrant non-English language spoken in the USA, the language most studied in high schools and universities, the language most people will tell you that they wish they could speak." (p. 79)

Studies show that the dropout rate of second language students in a traditional program can be as high as 95%. When TPR is a central feature of a language program this percentage can be reversed. Spanish is spoken by at least an estimated 350 million people around the world and is currently the 4th most spoken language worldwide.

As teachers, we want to keep our students fully engaged in all the activities, making sure that they are learning effectively, and that the students enjoy and have a positive attitude toward any classroom activity. However, there are cultural and social differences that can make teaching abroad in a new country challenging. There are gaps in the formulation of effective techniques to enhance the teaching of Spanish as a second language. It is very difficult to find adequate strategies, videos or guides aligned with the curricula of teaching Spanish language. It would be very useful to have a suitable guide to follow at hand. Therefore, we need to be prepared as best as we can in a classroom with limited teaching resources.

The final product of this project is an interactive guide that provides effective techniques for classroom teachers to engage students to learn new daily commands, sight words and alphabet letters to start building words.

The TPR is a method that incorporates corporal movements and gestures that facilitate the acquisition of the Spanish language. This project will help teachers to share knowledge in a more fluid and entertaining way, where the students feel motivated and want to know more in a natural way, understanding the target language with high-speed long-term retention and stress-free.

This project provides a useful resource that will benefit both teachers and students. Teachers will have access to videos of activities that can be used with the basic topics every teacher needs when start teaching Spanish in a classroom. The interactive guided is divided into five sections and will be arranged in this sequence, (a) What is TPR? (b) Goals and objectives of

teaching using TPR activities. (c) Benefits of using TPR (d) Interactive videos (separated by categories: Daily commands, alphabet letters and sight words); (e) How to use TPR in your classroom and Tips to create a TPR.

Chapter four: The Project

TPR Guide for Teachers

TPR INTERACTIVE GUIDE FOR TEACHERS



Introduction

Total Physical Response, or TPR was created by American psychologist Dr. James Asher and is based on the experience of how humans learn their first language.

This method offers a way to teach speaking and listening skills that are communicative, interactive, and contextualized, while still being affective and enjoyable.

The TPR technique is based on the idea that the brain learns best through physical activity.

When students are given tasks that involve movement and sound, they can better remember and understand the target language. TPR can be adapted to fit any classroom age and situation and is a very versatile method.

The implementation of this interactive movements in your lesson plans will not only help teachers find other ways of learning, but it will also help students gain comprehension of the language target. This guide will empower teachers as leader instructors and children as language learners.

The present project is the design of an interactive TPR guide for teachers. I have included portions of the Power Point Presentation (PPT) in this chapter that focus on implementing effective strategies to teach Spanish as a second language.

This presentation will explain, how to use your body to improve learning and how to apply this method in our teaching practice. The expectation of this PPT is to contribute to the teaching and learning of foreign languages. In addition, the presentation aims to raise awareness of a different instructional method for Spanish language learners and the effectiveness of those strategies as a pedagogical alternative for Spanish language acquisition.

The delivery of this guide with activities and examples is supported by a presentation that includes 5 stages: The first slide aims to provide a short theoretical explanation of the meaning of TPR for education and second language acquisition. The second stage objective focuses on goals and objectives of teaching using TPR activities. The third stage aims to explain the benefits of using TPR in the classroom. The fourth is where teachers can find examples of interactive videos separated by categories. The topics chosen are the most used in an Elementary classroom. The last stage are detailed instructions about how to use TPR for the first time in your classroom and tips to create a TPR. This guide begins with Figure 1; Appendix A.

Figure 1

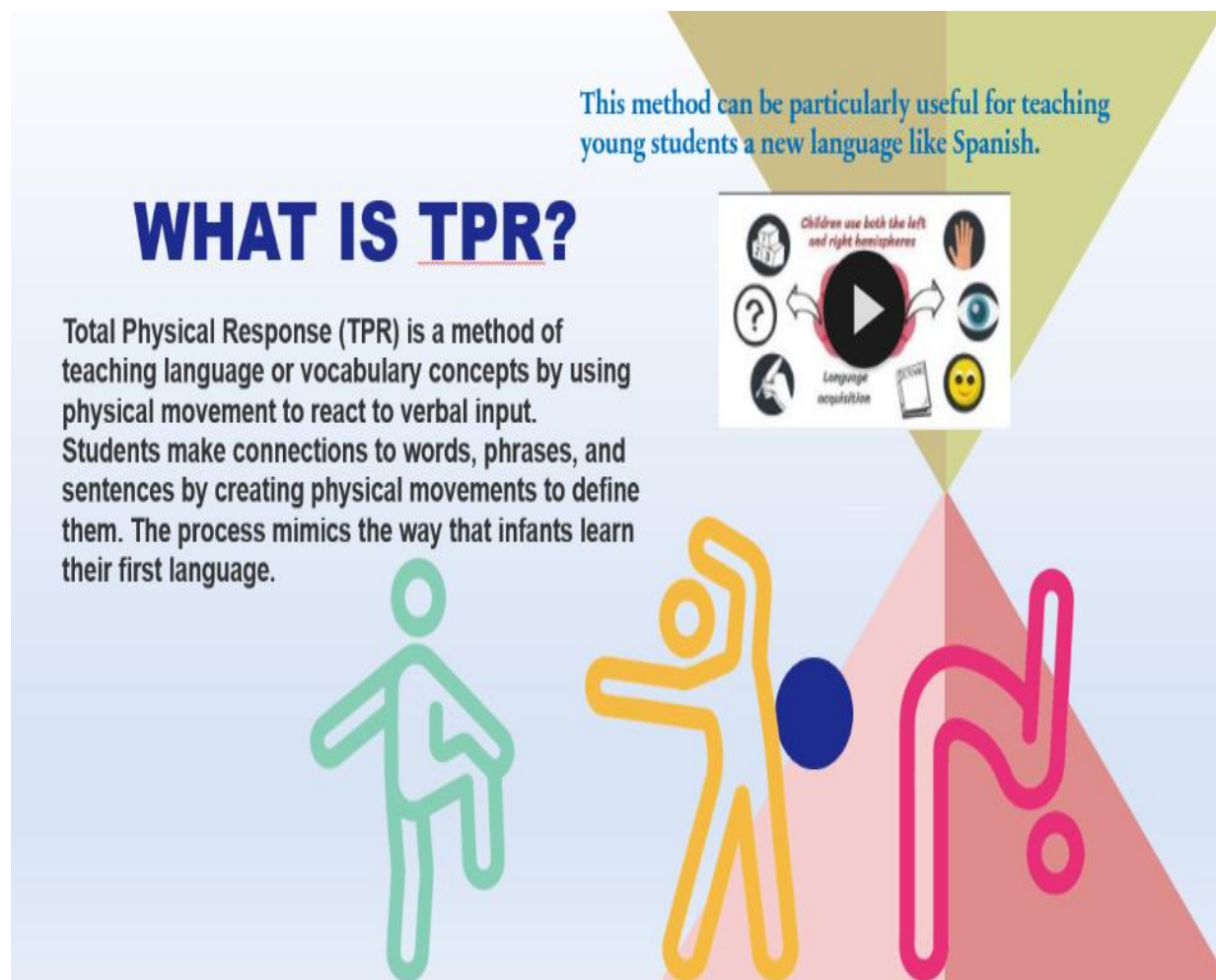


First Stage

In this stage I start with a definition of TPR (Figure 2; see Appendix B). There, teachers will find a video to know more about how Professor Asher believed that to have a meaningful learning and acquire knowledge faster, we should use both sides of the brain. Using both hemispheres of the brain to learn a language incorporating movement ensure learning, because the left side of the brain is responsible for language acquisition, and the right side of the brain is responsible for motor responses and movement.

Figure 2

What is Total Physical Response?



Next, the focus is placed on the objectives of teaching using TPR activities to teach (Figure 3). See also Appendix C, Slide #3. There is a short video showcasing a teacher applying James Asher's method in his classroom. This video shows that the method works for all ages and results in long term retention without the need of translation. Since the method eliminates repetition and memorization of rules, it is stress free for both (teacher and students).

Figure 3

Goals and Objectives of Teaching Using TPR activities

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF TEACHING USING TPR ACTIVITIES

- Help students understand the meaning of new words quickly.
- Put vocabulary in context and get the students to have a better understanding of stories and topics.
- Create a brain link between speech and action to boost language and vocabulary learning.
- Physically interact with language to solidify and demonstrate comprehension. The strategy can be used to learn new vocabulary words, to demonstrate comprehension of words, phrases and sentences, to demonstrate the understanding of a sequence of sentences, or even the progression of events in a story.

After explaining the objectives of teaching using TPR strategies, we focused our attention on the benefits of using TPR in the classroom (Figure 4). See Appendix D, Slide #4.

Figure 4

Benefits of Using TPR

BENEFITS OF USING TPR

- ✓ Reduces student inhibitions and lowers stress.
- ✓ Activities with TPR are great for kinesthetic learners who need more action or hands on activities.

Following the explanation of the benefits of using this strategy, a video is presented, where we observe a demonstration of a class for kinesthetic students. Students are learning the vowels through movements and chants. Showing that when students use their whole bodies to learn, muscle memory gained from the activity reinforces the neural pathways created during the learning process. Integrating exercise with learning increases cortical mass, blood flow, and oxygen delivered to the brain. In fact, many evidences highlighted that physical exercise (PE) affects brain plasticity, influencing cognition and wellbeing (Weinberg and Gould, 2015).

We continue explaining the benefits of including physical activity to improve academic achievement, behavior, and attention in the classroom to avoid being tired, unfocused, or bored (Figure 5) See also Appendix E, Slide #5.

Figure 5

Benefits of Using TPR

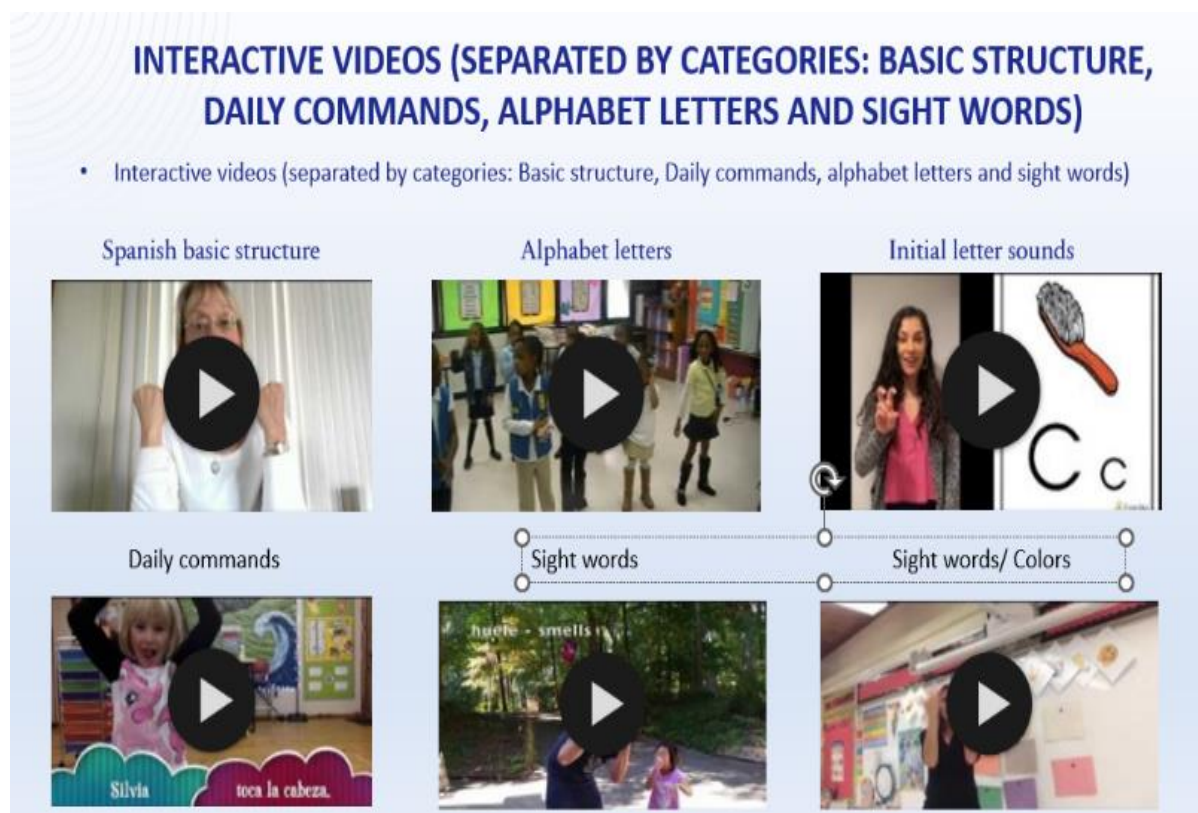
- ✓ Worksheets are not necessary.
- ✓ It is effective for all age groups and abilities.
- ✓ Physical activity stimulates blood circulation thus oxygenation in the body. With an increased blood and oxygen flow, students are more alert and attentive.

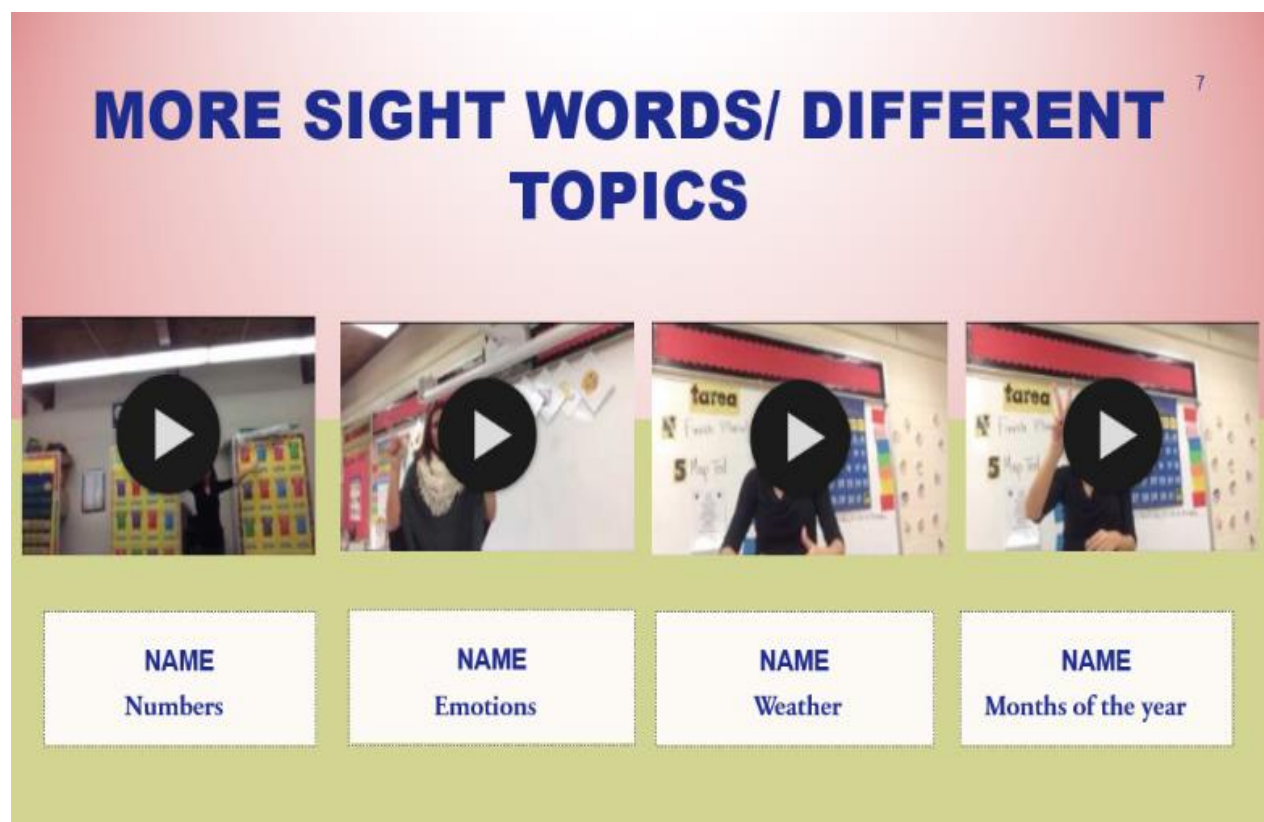


Next, teachers will then be presented with the main objective of this presentation, interactive videos separated by categories that teachers use every day when teaching Spanish as a second language.

This slide is important because it gives ideas and strategies to keep motivated and engaged students of different ages. (Figure 6) Teachers could use some (or all) of these videos to work in class and use personalized learning to deliver each lesson.

These videos (Figure 6 and 7. See also Appendix F and G, slide # 6, #7) have been chosen because there are activities and resources that can be easily accessed. You can also see the teacher promoting more creative learning environments giving the students more opportunities to interact and express their learning.

Figure 6*Interactive videos***Figure 7***More videos, sight words and different topics*



The last stage of the TPR guide begins with an approach about how to use TPR for the first time in the classroom (Figure 8 and 9; See also Appendix H and I, Slide # 8 and #9). The content gives tips and information about how to apply TPR to a lesson. Furthermore, when teaching with this technique it is important to take into account the learner's culture and background.

Figure 8

HOW TO USE TPR FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YOUR CLASSROOM AND TIPS TO CREATE A TPR ⁸

- ❑ Decide on the vocabulary you will be teaching and think about the most effective movements to use.
- ❑ **Teacher modelling:** show the students the movement and say the vocabulary word. Be sure to do this a few times so everyone understands what the teacher is doing.
- ❑ **Student modelling:** now it is time to get the students involved. Choose a few and have them mimic the action and say the vocabulary word. This will help the rest of the class understand what the teacher needs them to do in the next step.

Figure 9

- ❑ **Student participation:** to ensure everyone understands, have the entire class ⁹ model the movement and say the word together. This will help relieve some of the self-consciousness the students may feel saying a new word or doing a funny action.

Write it down: write the word down on the board. Not doing this earlier helps students focus on the sounds in the word and teacher's actions, rather than the spelling of it. Writing it down for them at this point in the process helps students connect the sound with a written word.

Keep a number of "TPR friendly" songs ready on your computer. Young children love a break from the lesson content to sing and act-out a related song.

CLEAR UP A SPACE IN THE CLASSROOM, ONE YOUR STUDENTS CAN EASILY MANEUVER AROUND.

You may need several objects or realia - as many as you'd like to use.

I had never considered teaching a student whose primary language was not English, a student who struggles with vocabulary and comprehension, or a student who cannot sit still during a lesson. Or perhaps a student whose mind tends to wander during the most important instructional lessons. All this seemed like a very difficult goal to achieve, and teachers who are not experienced or trained with teaching language learners tend to be discouraged.

As educators we can find in any classroom and at any age or level, each type of student previously described. Teachers therefore have the responsibility to find a variety of instructional strategies in order to help each student as needed. TPR allows struggling learners opportunities for physical activity, repetition, and mirroring of others. Having more opportunities to learn in different ways reduce anxiety and prevent students to be sleepy or bored.

TPR is a strategy that supports the learning styles and needs of many students at many different levels, especially in the areas of vocabulary, language, and comprehension. Learners make connections to words, phrases, and sentences by freely creating physical movements to define them. TPR is a way to physically interact with language and to solidify and demonstrate comprehension. demonstrating the understanding of a sequence of sentences, or even the progression of events in a story.

Creating movements using language requires mental connections that trigger memory and enhance long-term recall; therefore, by repeating meaningful movements when learning in a lesson, students improve their ability to understand and remember words and definitions.

After many years of experience teaching different languages at different ages, from children to adults, I concluded that the only effective technique with positive results was to apply physical movement according to each topic or content.

Many people will think that it is more complex when teaching adults or teenagers to get them to participate. However, in my experience, significant learning can be achieved depending on the intensity of the movements to be applied. It is definitely very important to get to know your group of students first. Nevertheless, by applying these strategies you can have a motivated class that enjoys and is immersed in learning.

Teaching a new language could be very stressful. In every school I have worked with, I have found that most teachers do not have enough confidence or strategies to adapt their lessons to the needs of language learners or to find suitable resources without spending a lot of time searching. For this reason, I created an interactive Total Physical Response guide for educators, where they can find videos and dynamic strategies to teach the basic topics in Spanish, such as the alphabet, daily vocabulary, high frequency words and more. It is addressed to all Spanish language educators and ESL teachers who would also benefit from this manual. After all, the responsibility of creating a positive learning environment that allows language learners to feel connected, comfortable, and confident to participate in class, relies on the teacher.

In order for this guide to be a continued success, it would be ideal to be completed with different and more varied topics. Thus, and eventually with the collaboration of more educators, we could have a complete and easily accessible guide for all teachers who need it.

References

- Asher, J. (1966). The learning strategy of the total physical response: A review. *Modern Language Journal*, 50 (2) 79-84.
- Asher, J. J. (2000). Learning another language through actions. Los Gatos: Sky Oaks Productions.
- Asher, J. J. (2003). Learning another language through actions (6th ed.). Los Gatos, CA: Sky Oaks Production.
- Astri, Z. (2018). The use of Total Physical Response method for different learning styles in English vocabulary development. *SELTICS*, 1(1), 25-38.
<https://ejournals.umma.ac.id/index.php/seltics/article/view/57>
- Brian Ryu. (2020, October 8). *TPR (Total Physical Response Words) for Spanish 1 and 2* [Video file]. You Tube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vHXL7lu-6Eg>
- Bydvideo. (2009, June 24). *A successful start with TPR- 6th grade Spanish* [Video file]. You Tube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KmfnrYerYbY>
- Cañabate, D., Soler, A. (2017). Movimiento y lenguajes. De la experiencia sensorio-perceptiva a la conciencia y el pensamiento. Editorial Graó.
- Corballis MC. Left brain, right brain: facts and fantasies. *PLoS Biol.* 2014;12(1):e1001767. [doi: 10.1371/journal.pbio.1001767](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.1001767)
- Cummins, J. (1981). The role of primary language development in promoting educational success for language minority students. In schooling and language minority students: A theoretical framework. Los Angeles: Evaluation, Dissemination, and Assessment Center, California State University.

DeCecco, J. (1968). *The Psychology of Learning and Instruction: Educational Psychology*. Englewood Cliffs, N. J: Prentice-Hall.

Diane Fernandez. (2016, December 7). *Spanish colors with TPR* [Video file]. You Tube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJt1Qah5SHM>

Diane Fernandez. (2016, December 7). *Spanish emotions with motions* [Video file]. You Tube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUb5jl21taY>

Diane Fernandez. (2016, December 8). *Numbers 0-31 with TPR* [Video file]. You Tube

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sa5V_22LNhA

Diane Fernandez. (2016, December 8). *Spanish weather with TPR* [Video file]. You Tube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qv2sWjOqOdI>

Diane Fernandez. (2016, December 8). *Spanish months of year & days of week* [Video file]. You

Tube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aZBHoxZ5WqM>

Diaz, M. (1983). The impact of second-language learning on the development of verbal and spatial abilities. *DA*, 43, 04-B, 1235. CT: Yale University.

Dishman, R. K. 1985. Medical psychology in exercise and sport. *Medical Clinics of North America*, 69: 123–143.

Dishman, R. K. 1986. “Mental health”. In *Physical activity and well-being*, Edited by: Seefeldt, V. 303–341. Reston, VA: American Alliance of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance.

Doherty, A., Miravalles, A. (2019). Physical activity and cognition: Inseparable in the classroom.

Frontiers in Education.V.4. [DOI=10.3389/feduc.2019.00105](https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2019.00105)

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/feduc.2019.00105>

Duan, Y. (2021). The application of total physical response method (TPR) in Preschool

children's English teaching. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 11(10), 1323-

1333. [DOI:10.17507/tpls.1110.22](https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1110.22)

Er, S. (2013). Using total physical response method in early childhood foreign language teaching

environments, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Vol 93, 1766-1768,

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.10.113>.

Folake Akinola- Pinard. (2017, September 18). *Ms. Rosado's Kinesthetic Transitions in Spanish*

Class(Imovie version) [Video file]. You Tube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XZiMbRvmS4>

Holleny, L. (2012). The effectiveness of total physical response storytelling for language

learning with special education students. Rowan University.

ILSI Global. (2015, October 20). *TAKE10: Bringing Physical Activity into the Classroom* [Video

file]. You Tube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBZl6BdAoSk>

Isadora Arzu. (2012, September 15). *SPANISH ALPHABET SONG, TPR* [Video file]. You Tube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CcQ7TaILZKA>

Jensen, E. (2000). *Moving with the brain in mind*. Corwin Press.

Kelli & Karl Ebel. (2017, January 10). *TPR Spanish I*[Video file]. You Tube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7yVDdVzZ8OE>

- Klimova B. (2018). Learning a foreign language: A review on recent findings about its effect on the enhancement of cognitive functions among healthy older individuals. *Front Hum Neurosci.* [doi: 10.3389/fnhum.2018.00305](https://doi.org/10.3389/fnhum.2018.00305)
- Kuo, F., Hsu, C., Fang, W., Chen, N (2013). The effects of embodiment-based TPR approach on student English vocabulary learning achievement, retention and acceptance, *Journal of King Saud University – Computer and Information Sciences.* 63-70.
- Lai Y., & Chang K. (2020). Improvement of attention in Elementary School students through fixation focus training activity. *Int J Environ Res Public Health.*17(13):4780. [doi: 10.3390/ijerph17134780](https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17134780)
- Macedonia, M. (2014). Bringing back the body into the mind: Gestures enhance word learning in foreign language. In Reeve, G. M. & Bursten, S. N. (Eds.), *Pedagogical psychology: Beyond the 21st century.* Lausanne: Frontiers Media SA.
- Macedonia, M., & von Kriegstein, K. (2012). Gestures enhance foreign language learning. *Biolinguistics*, 6, 393–416.
- Marian, V., & Shook, A. (2012). In *Cerebrum: the Dana forum on brain science. The Cognitive Benefits of Being Bilingual.* (Vol. 2012). Dana Foundation
- McNeill, D. (2005). *Gesture and Thought.* University of Chicago Press. <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226514642.001.0001>
- Mendoza, G. (2016). Exploring gesturing as a natural approach to impact stages of second language development: A multiple baseline, single case study of a head start child.
- Moses, K. (2012). Movement can increase learning in children. Michigan State University Extension. https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/movement_can_increase_learning_in_children

- Muhren, A. (2003). Total Physical Response (TPR): An effective language learning method at beginner/intermediate levels. home.planet.nl/~mhren000/tpr/primer_tpr.pdf.
- [I. S. P. \(1990\) Teaching and learning vocabulary. New York, NY: Newbury House](#)
- Närhi V., Kiiski T. & Savolainen H. (2017). Reducing disruptive behaviours and improving classroom behavioural climate with class-wide positive behaviour support in middle schools. *British Educational Research Journal*. 43(6):1186–205.
- Nation, I. (1990) Teaching and learning vocabulary. Newbury House, New York.
- Porto Angel, A., & Chaparro Cruz, L. (2014). The impact of implementing TPR stress-free activities for encouraging participation from students at a public school in their encouraging participation from students at a public school in their English class. https://ciencia.lasalle.edu.co/lic_lenguas/21
- Potowski, K. (2010). Spanish in the USA. University of Illinois at Chicago
[DOI: 10.1017/CBO9780511779855.005](https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511779855.005)
- Richards, J., & Rodgers, T. (2001). Total Physical Response. *In Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching* (Cambridge Language Teaching Library, pp. 73-80). Cambridge University Press. <http://doi:10.1017/CBO9780511667305.008>
- Scott, W., Ytreberg, L. (1990). Teaching english to children. New York: Longman.
- Simply Bilingual. (2020, March 22). *Los Sonidos Iniciales (Spanish letter Sounds)* [Video file]. You Tube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aNMwtfP-jC4>

Singnspeakspanish. (2015, March 16). *Y3 Sing 'n Speak Spanish TPR Gestures* [Video file]. You Tube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XOfIaJbpGPU&t=5s>

Sonstroem, R. J. 1984. "Exercise and self-esteem". In *Exercise and sport sciences reviews*, Edited by: Terjung, R. L. 123–155. Lexington, MA: The Collamore Press.

Strickland, D., Shanahan, T. (2004). Laying the groundwork for literacy. *Educational Leadership*, v61 n6 p74

TEFL Society. (2020, September 10). *TEFL Teaching - Total Physical Response (TPR)* [Video file]. You Tube. [TEFL Teaching - Total Physical Response \(TPR\) - YouTube](#)

Trakhtenberg, E. (2008). The effects of guided imagery on the immune system: A critical review. *The International journal of neuroscience*. 118. 839-55.
[DOI:10.1080/00207450701792705](https://doi.org/10.1080/00207450701792705).

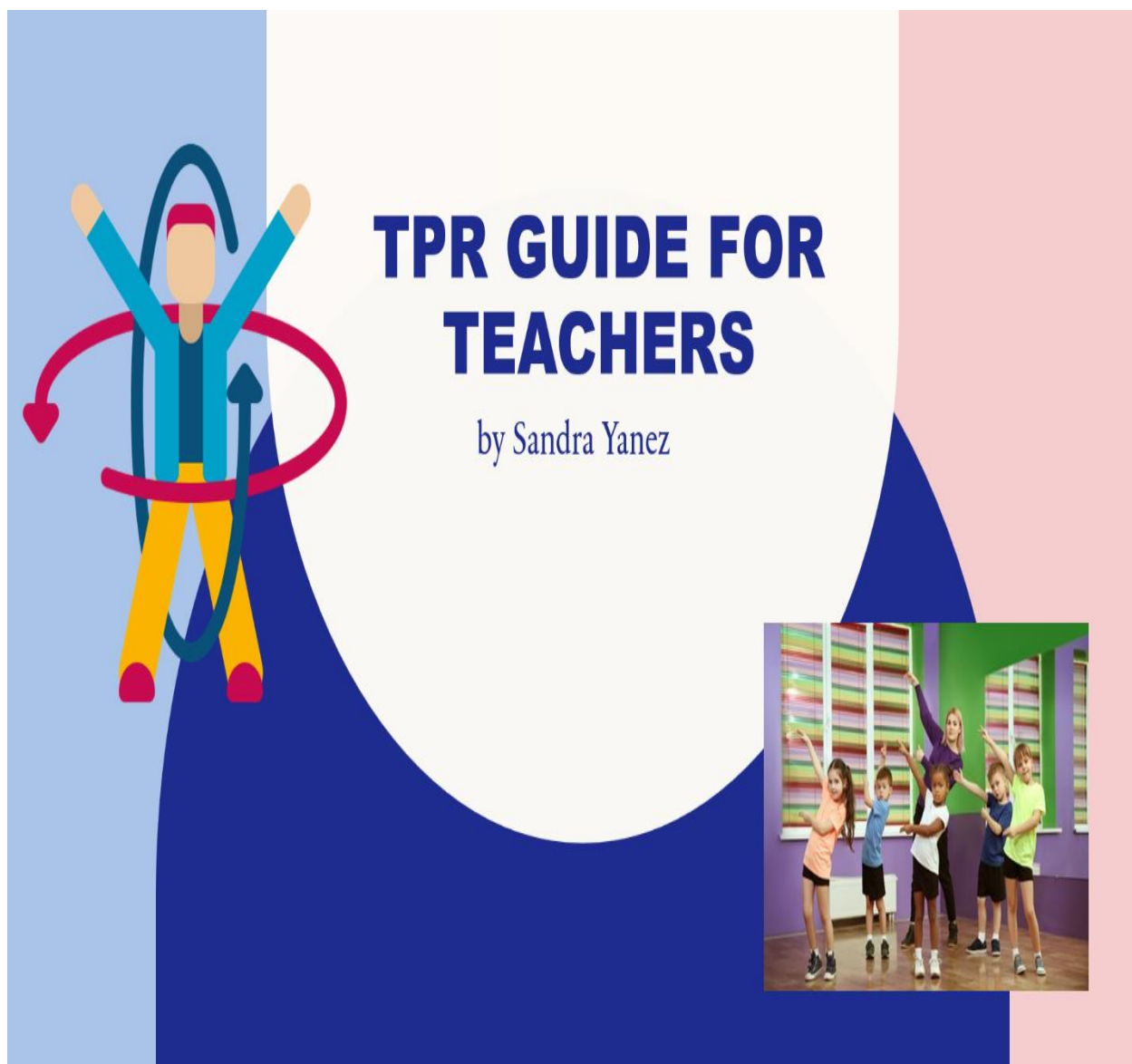
Varano, B. (2021). How to use TPR effectively as an online English teacher.
<https://www.goabroad.com/articles/teach-abroad/how-to-use-tpr-online>

Weineck, J. (2004). *Optimales Training*. Balingen: Spitta-Verl.

Weingber, R., & Gould D. (2015). *Foundations of sport and exercise psychology*, 6th Edn. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Appendix A

PPT Slide #1



Appendix B

Slide #2

This method can be particularly useful for teaching young students a new language like Spanish.

WHAT IS TPR?

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a method of teaching language or vocabulary concepts by using physical movement to react to verbal input. Students make connections to words, phrases, and sentences by creating physical movements to define them. The process mimics the way that infants learn their first language.



Note: Video URL [TEFL Teaching - Total Physical Response \(TPR\) - YouTube](#)

Appendix C

Slide #3



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF TEACHING USING TPR ACTIVITIES

3

- Help students understand the meaning of new words quickly.
- Put vocabulary in context and get the students to have a better understanding of stories and topics.
- Create a brain link between speech and action to boost language and vocabulary learning.
- Physically interact with language to solidify and demonstrate comprehension. The strategy can be used to learn new vocabulary words, to demonstrate comprehension of words, phrases and sentences, to demonstrate the understanding of a sequence of sentences, or even the progression of events in a story.



Note: Video URL [A Successful Start with TPR - 6th Grade Spanish - YouTube](#)

Appendix D**Slide #4**

BENEFITS OF USING TPR

- ✓ Reduces student inhibitions and lowers stress.
- ✓ Activities with TPR are great for kinesthetic learners who need more action or hands on activities.
- ✓ TPR is a great way to get immediate attention because students will have to do actions corresponding to words or phrases the teachers say.
- ✓ TPR is a simple way to involve students in the lesson in a more impactful way.
- ✓ TPR is less about pronunciations and spelling than it is about comprehending what the word means.



Note: Video URL [Ms. Rosado's Kinesthetic Transitions in Spanish Class\(Imovie version\) - YouTube](#)

Appendix E

Slide #5

- ✓ Worksheets are not necessary.
- ✓ It is effective for all age groups and abilities.
- ✓ Physical activity stimulates blood circulation thus oxygenation in the body. With an increased blood and oxygen flow, students are more alert and attentive.



Note: Video URL [TAKE10: Bringing Physical Activity into the Classroom - YouTube](#)

Appendix F

Slide #6

INTERACTIVE VIDEOS (SEPARATED BY CATEGORIES: BASIC STRUCTURE, DAILY COMMANDS, ALPHABET LETTERS AND SIGHT WORDS)

- Interactive videos (separated by categories: Basic structure, Daily commands, alphabet letters and sight words)

Spanish basic structure



Alphabet letters



Initial letter sounds



Daily commands



Sight words



Sight words/ Colors



Note: Videos URL Spanish basic structure <https://youtu.be/XOfIaJbpGPU>

Alphabet letters <https://youtu.be/CcQ7TaILZKA>

Initial letter sounds <https://youtu.be/aNMwtfP-jC4>

Daily Commands <https://youtu.be/7yVDdVzZ8OE>

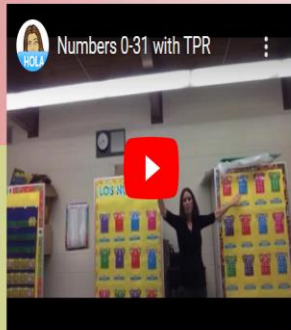
Sight words <https://youtu.be/vHXL7Iu-6Eg>

Sightwords/ Colors <https://youtu.be/KJt1Qah5SHM>

Appendix G

Slide #7

MORE SIGHT WORDS/ DIFFERENT TOPICS ⁷



Numbers



Emotions



Weather



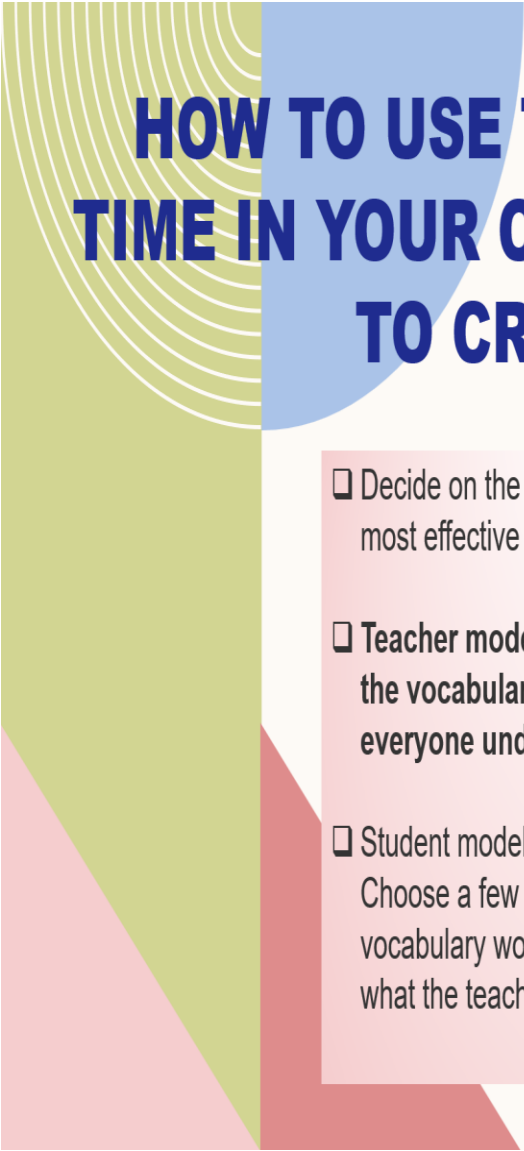
Months of the year

Note: Videos URL Numbers https://youtu.be/sa5V_22LNhA

Emotions <https://youtu.be/iUb5jl21taY>

Weather <https://youtu.be/Qv2sWjOqOdI>

Months of the year <https://youtu.be/aZBHoxZ5WqM>

Appendix H**Slide #8**

HOW TO USE TPR FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YOUR CLASSROOM AND TIPS TO CREATE A TPR

8

- ☐ Decide on the vocabulary you will be teaching and think about the most effective movements to use.
- ☐ **Teacher modelling: show the students the movement and say the vocabulary word. Be sure to do this a few times so everyone understands what the teacher is doing.**
- ☐ Student modelling: now it is time to get the students involved. Choose a few and have them mimic the action and say the vocabulary word. This will help the rest of the class understand what the teacher needs them to do in the next step.

Appendix I

Slide #9

- **Student participation:** to ensure everyone understands, have the entire class ⁹ model the movement and say the word together. This will help relieve some of the self-consciousness the students may feel saying a new word or doing a funny action.

Write it down: write the word down on the board. Not doing this earlier helps students focus on the sounds in the word and teacher's actions, rather than the spelling of it. Writing it down for them at this point in the process helps students connect the sound with a written word.

Keep a number of "TPR friendly" songs ready on your computer. Young children love a break from the lesson content to sing and act-out a related song.

CLEAR UP A SPACE IN THE CLASSROOM, ONE YOUR STUDENTS CAN EASILY MANEUVER AROUND.

You may need several objects or realia - as many as you'd like to use.



Appendix J**Slide #10**

THANK YOU

Sandra Yanez

taniyanez01@gmail.com